

NOTE

Ampulex compressa (F.) in Venezuela
(Hymenoptera: Sphecidae)

Ampulex compressa (F.), a cockroach predator, is a native of the Oriental Region, and possibly also the Ethiopian Region where it is widespread. Over the years it has been established either accidentally or intentionally on a number of islands: Mauritius, Reunion, Chagos Archipelago, Seychelles, the East Indies, New Caledonia, Australia, Midway, Hawaii, Cook, and St. Helena (Bohart and Menke, 1976, Sphecid Wasps of the World, Univ. Calif. Press, Berkeley, ix + 695 pp.). The Hawaiian introduction was intentional in an effort to control household cockroaches.

We report here the first known introduction of *compressa* in the New World. The species has been collected at a number of localities in north central Venezuela where it is obviously firmly established. It is not known when the wasp was first introduced to the country but the earliest record dates from 1978 in the city of Barquisemeto. Most of the 35 specimens that we have seen were collected inside old urban buildings on walls with cracks and holes inhabited by cockroaches, mainly *Periplaneta americana* (L.) and *Blattella germanica* (L.). Wasps were actively mainly in the morning.

The red mid- and hindfemora distinguish *compressa* from other large, metallic green, native Neotropical species of *Ampulex*, all of which have entirely green or black legs.

We have seen material from the following localities (voucher specimens in the Universidad Centro-Occidental, Barquisemeto, and the National Museum of Natural History, Washington D.C.): *Aragua*: Maracay, April 11, 1980, E. Yustiz. *Guarico*: San Juan de los Morros, July 24, 1981, J. Huerta. *Lara*: Barquisemeto, Nov. 5, 1978, Dec. 10, 1979, Jan. 6, 1980, March, 2, 1980, Jan. 25, 1981, Feb. 9, 1981, Feb. 14, 1981, July 15, 1981, Aug. 18, 1981, E. Yustiz; Sept. 12, 1979, F. A. Diaz; March 8, 1980, April 15, 1980, H. Escalona; March 31, 1982, collected on tree trunk, C. Perdomo; March 25, 1982, collected on tree trunk of *Melicocca bijuga*, A. Pinero. Quibor, April 16, 1980. San Pedro, Distrito Torres, 1600 m., Aug. 15, 1981, G. Perez. *Yaracuy*: San Felipe, March 18, 1980, E. Yustiz; Nirgua, Aug. 15, 1981, E. Yustiz.

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